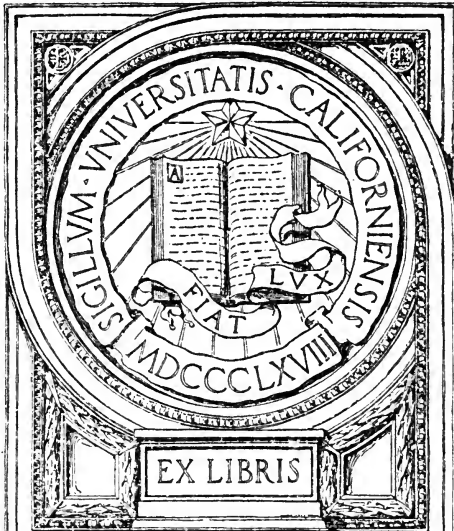


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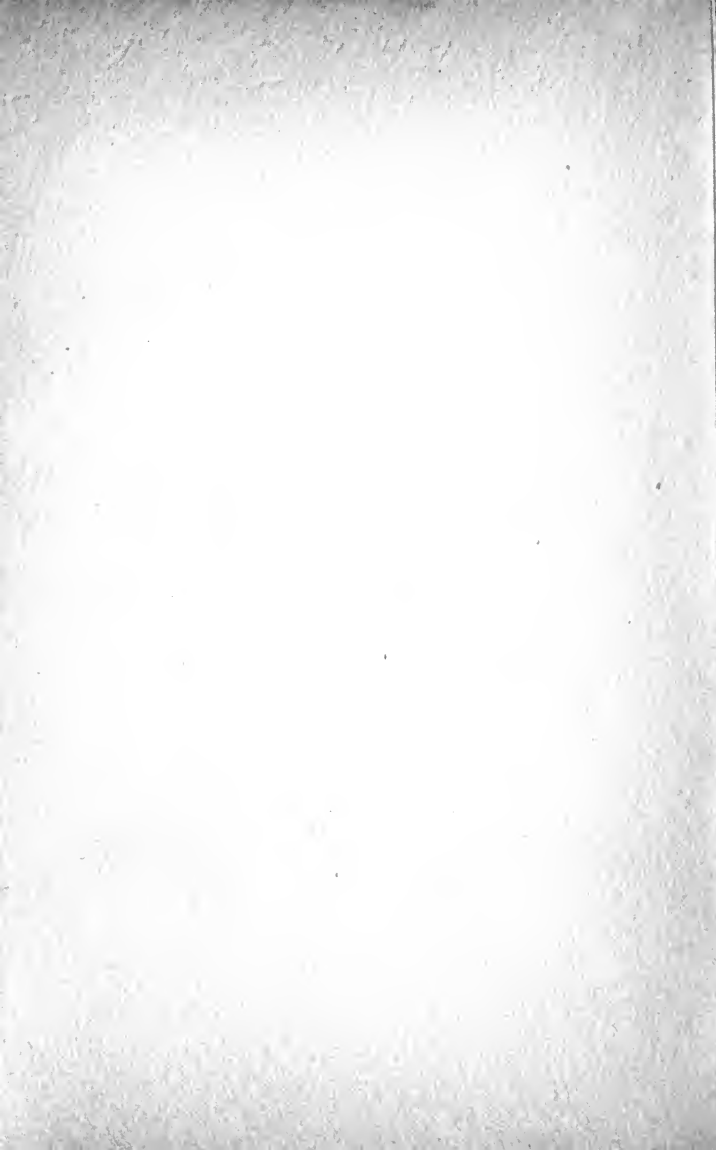
T.C.

A HOSTING OF HEROES.

AND OTHER POEMS,
BY ELEANOR COX.







A HOSTING
OF
HEROES

AND OTHER POEMS

BY
ELEANOR R. COX



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1911

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TO TWO ULSTER POETS.

1911

MAN

I have written verses on many themes.

To weave rhymes always brought me a great joy ever from the day I left this grey Ulster town as a child until my return a year ago. To this visit I owe the friendship which turned my thoughts to the old stories.

It is meet, therefore, that to you, to whom Cuchulain is still an ideal, I should dedicate this little book in remembrance of many gracious hours.

ELEANOR R. COX.

Inisceillean, *Inisceillean*,

An Foghar, 1911.

CUCHULAIN.

"Never will I break my vow, nor wrong my land, nor sell my chief."—CUCHULAIN.

*Thou, most strong and beautiful,
Thou, most brave and dutiful,
Thou, thy Ulster's shield and sword,
Thou, her Servant and her Lord,
Thou, whose deeds athwart the years
Flash, a burnished field of spears,
Mighty Cuchulain!*

*Thou, whose name in splendor lone
Rears itself, a pillar-stone,*
Radiant through the rains and night,
On thy land's grey storied height,
Thou, who scatheless held thy faith
To thy utmost, labored breath,
Knightly Cuchulain!*

*Lo! it is to thee I raise
Here, this testament of praise,
Chanting with glad lips thy fame,
Mouth of Truth and Soul of Flame,
Light that shall not fade or fail,
Sun-bright symbol of the Gael!
Peerless Cuchulain!*

* Cuchulain's pillar stone, where he died, still stands at Knockbridge, near Dundalk, and is called *Cloac a fear mór*=the stone of the big man.

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A HOSTING OF HEROES



A HOSTING OF HEROES.

LORD God, to Thee a song of praise
For these, Thy paladins, we raise
Each name of whom, a flag unfurled
Athwart the ramparts of the world,
Remains a radiant Word and Sign
Of all that made or makes divine
The race wherefrom they drew their breath,
The land they loved and served till death.

From him who 'midst his foes alone,
Self-bound unto the Pillar-stone,
To Doom's grey face and darkling skies
Turned yet unconquered, sun-glad eyes,*
To him, that later chief,† whose name
Gleams yet a torch of unquenched flame,
A Beacon flung against the dark,
To light our feet to Freedom's ark.

* Cuchulain.

† Parnell.

For all who kept their sword-bright trust,
Their sword-bright faith undimmed of rust ;
From whose dead lips unto our own
The sacred word of Duty borne
Shall yet from night uplift our land,
And work the glory that they planned—
For those we praise, for these we laud
Thy everlasting Name, Lord God.

THE DREAM OF ANGUS OG.*

WHEN the Rose o' Morn through the Dawn was
 breaking,
And white on the hearth was last night's flame,
Thither to me 'twixt sleeping and waking,
Singing out of the mists she came.

And grey as the mists on the spectre meadows
 Were the eyes that on my eyes she laid,
And her hair's red splendor through the shadows
 Like to the marsh-fire gleamed and played.

And she sang of the wondrous far-off places
 That a man may only see in dreams,
The Death-still, odorous, starlit spaces
 Where Time is lost and no life gleams.

And there till the day had its crest uplifted,
 She stood, with her still face bent on me,
Then forth with the Dawn departing drifted
 Light as a foam-fleck on the sea.

* Angus Og, literally Young Angus, a Gaelic demi-god of Immortal Youth.

And now my heart is the heart of a swallow
That here no solace of rest may find,
For evermore I follow and follow
Her white feet glancing down the wind.

And for evermore in my ears are ringing
(Oh ! red lips yet shall I kiss you dumb !)
Twain sole words of that May morn's singing,
Calling to me, " Hither ! " and " Come ! "

From flower-bright fields to the wild lake-sedges
Crying my steps when the Day has gone,
Till dim and small down the Night's pale edges
The stars have fluttered one by one.

And light as the thought of a love forgotten
The hours skim past, while before me flies
That face of the Sun and Mist begotten,
Its singing lips and Death-cold eyes.

FLIGHT OF DIARMUID AND GRAINNE.*

LAUGHING she came to him, swift-footed, sweet,
Laid the command of her eyes on his eyes,
Captured the soul of him ardent and fleet,
Whispered him "Diarmuid, my dearest, arise!"

"Yonder the dawn-light cleaves sheer through the
dark,
Morn rises early to gladden our way,
Fleeing, our spirits shall soar with the lark,
Herald to hymn us to Life's fuller day."

"Ah, but my loyalty!"—"Ah, but my love—
Is that a little thing, think you, O man?
Higher is it than the high gods above—
Mated we were ere Creation began!"

* Grainne, daughter of King Cormac, betrothed, unwillingly, to Fionn McCumhal, loved Diarmuid O'Duibhne, one of his captains, and persuaded him to elope with her. Their subsequent wanderings and Diarmuid's tragic death form what is, perhaps, the most striking romantic story of pre-Christian Ireland.

Then, " But the bride of my liege-lord thou art,
Grainne, my Princess, and I am his friend,"
" Nay, but I follow the law of my heart,
That is thine only, and thine to the end ! "

Fire to the flame of her bidding he rose,
And, one last glance at great Fionn held fast,
Leashed in the chain of his spell-wrought repose,
Out of the doors of the Palace they passed.

Stars lingered yet in the lap of the Night,
Waiting their pleasure and wooing them on,
Yet for a moment they paused in their flight,
Hand touching hand in the sweet-scented Dawn.

Lip pressed to lip in a virginal, new
Rapture that sped like white fire down each vein,
While in that Love's first communion they grew
Wise as the gods are of Bliss and of Pain.

Silent as gods when they quaff the divine
Essence of life, save for one murmured word ;
" Bride of my soul, who for ever art mine ! "
" Thine, past all parting, my love and my lord ! "

Oh, for the grace of that journey begun !

Night fled before them, and red rose the Morn,
Then with fair faces upraised to the Sun,
Joyous they sang for the joy to them born,

Fearless and sweet rose their paeon of praise,
Hymning the Love that makes laughter of Death,
Nature, their Mother, through all her green ways
Echoed their singing with rapturous breath.

DIARMUID AND GRAINNE AT THE
FOREST OF DOORIS.

SWEETER than any life beneath the sun,
Or any dream of Life the high gods deign
To let upon men's sleeping eyelids shine,
Was that for these at Dooris now begun.

For swift and strong and beautiful, their lips
Unspoiled, insatiate, bent to kiss the cup
Of Perfect Joy the cloudless days held up—
The long sweet days of Light without eclipse.

For whether grey or gold the skies above,
For them undimmed shone one imperial sun—
And other light their glad eyes needed none—
The flame immortal of their mortal love.

And Summer wrought for them a garden-close
High-hedged and all a-bloom with blossoms rare ;
And sweeter all her roses for them were
For that among them gleamed one Death-red
Rose.

Yea, and for that, a little way outside
The scented hedgerows, clear-discerned, stood
Fate,
Saying, " Behold, a little while I wait
The day that shall destroy them and divide ! "

Thus fronting always, wheresoe'er they turned,
The Doom to be escaped not nor denied,
The splendor of the Love that else had died
Of its own greatness, ever brighter burned.

And if upon their raptured harmonies
Of speech and glance, a pause, at times, would
come,
'Twas but because great Pity smote them
dumb
For all their days that yet had been ere these.

So that fair Lord, the shining of whose face
Had lit their way from Tara through the Night,
Love, the high Emperor of their delight
Filled all their days with gladness and with
grace.

So armoured in their own bright fearlessness
Against what hap of sorrow or surprise
The hand of god or mortal might devise,
Laughing they drained their leeless Wine of
Bliss.

GRAINNE RETURNS TO TARA.

So bright-faced Diarmuid slept where no to-morrow
Should rouse him with its bugle-call of Light,
In that far land beyond the range of sorrow,
Where white-haired Angus bore him through
the night ;
While she for whom no morn of mortal waking
Should bring again the radiance of his smile,
Watched by him through the long days
unforsaking,
Deeming, perchance, that for a little while,

Might yet come true that word of Angus' speaking,
That by De Danaan wisardry restored,
Some shadow-semblance of himself displaying,
Should live again her ever worshipped-lord :
But as the long, bright days in still succession
Passed, bringing no light to the dead man's face,
So passed from out her life in cowled procession,
All that had made its Laughter, Love, and Grace.

And in their stead came that—the last, best
giving
Of the strong gods—the god-like consciousness,

That nevermore through all her years of living,
Should any great Pain, yea, or any Bliss
Reach to her soul, where on its high pedestal
Of utmost rapture, utmost Anguish known,
It kept its state inviolate and vestal,
A white lamp burning by a tomb alone.

But when no more the soft, unchecked splendor
Of those long days at Brugh her soul might
brook,
Nor any further hope the gods would lend her,
To Tara back her wistful way she took :
The courtiers watching with the avid vision
Of those who see a dead dream vivified,
Beholding in her eye that bright decision,
And on her lip that red, unconquered pride.

Murmured of marvels all belief exceeding—
Of women's veering faith—dead men forgot—
Interpreting each by his own light reading
Of Life, the change that Deathless Grief had
wrought :
The wondrous change—that sun-bright Winter
gleaming
Of a great spirit unsubdued of Pain,
That kept before men's eyes its royal seeming
When long had vanished Love's brief, radiant
reign.

But once—'twas in the singing April weather—
Came lilted to her on a vagrant breeze,
A snatch of song that they had sung together
In old, glad days beneath the quicken trees ;
And then for all she was a High King's daughter
Of whom no weakness any man might tell,
Down her pale cheeks the hot tears flowed like
water
Of brooks released from Winter's icy spell.

And "Diarmuid!" cried she twice and thrice,
and falling
Rose-white amongst the lilies at her feet,
Her weeping maidens deemed that in that calling
Her soul had sped her waiting lord's to greet :
But no such sweet release was to her given,
Whose fate it was behind a quenchless pride
Through long, grey years to hide the spirit riven
Past mortal hope, that day when Diarmuid died.

CUCHULAIN'S WOOING.

GREAT-LIMBED and swift and beautiful
Past any dream, he came to her,
From Emain Macha through a land
For gladness of the Spring astir.

And on the flutes of Morning blown,
Strong Joy that took for breath no pause,
The song of Breeze and Stream and Bird,
The herald of his coming was.

Yea, and through all her April ways,
To Erin's utmost sea-girt rim,
Through waking seed, and blade and leaf,
Green Nature laughed for joy of him.

And where he held his sun-bright course,
Straight-spiced arrow on its flight,
Men thronged as to a pageant wrought
By the high gods for their delight.

* Cuchulain of Muirthemne.—The hero champion of Ulster. Emain Macha, the palace of Ulster's Kings. Emer, Cuchulain's wife.

And seeing, with a fairer faith
The Deathless Mighty Ones adored,
Who thus unto their Ulster's need
Had shaped at once a shield and sword.

So through the singing land he passed,
The peerless warden of her fame,
So, Lord himself of Love and War,
Unto his fair-faced love he came.

EMER.

ROSE-BRIGHT where all were flower-fair,
A rose around whose petals yet
In order fresh and odorous
The dreams of maidenhood were set.

The green of April at her feet,
The joy of Springtime round her spread,
The hope of Summer in her eyes,
The gold of Sunrise on her head.

So first upon the sight of him*
Who down from Ulster rode alone
To bring his heart's high love to her,
In the sweet morning Emer shone.

No girl, but Spring herself stepped down
Awhile upon that daisied plain,
She sat where bright the lilacs spread,
Encompassed by her maiden train.

* Cuchulain.

With deft, swift skill of needlehood,
Where Fancy led the flying hand,
Inscribed on a silken scroll
Some storied glory of her land.

Till, raising to his shining height
Her veiled glance, the silken scroll
Slipped down, and in her sea-blue eyes
Shone forth her new-awakened soul.

And rising up, she placed in his
Her gentle palm, and to him gave,
Whose heart was glad for joy of her,
Her maiden welcome sweet and grave.

CUCHULAIN TO THE POETS.

O POETS, when you sing of me,
And of the deeds that I have done,
And of the battles that I won
For Ulster fighting mightily :
Praising me with high hearts of fire—
I pray you also in your song
Tell men how once the World's Desire
Was mine to love a whole day long.

Yea, rose-fair face and mouth of flame—
(O vision that no age shall dim !)
At sunrise o'er the world's bright rim
All golden-raimented she came ;
And leaning on the green hill there
To me in fashion woman-wise,
Through the dark twilight of her hair
I kissed her on the dew-cold eyes.

Aye, kissed until within their blue
A mortal woman's spirit shone,
Laughed back its answer to my own,
And mine into its sweet self drew—

Folding me there with an old rune
Of kings enwrapped in magic rest,
Till Life seemed all a drowsy noon
To be dreamed out upon her breast.

Her white dove's breast—O Men of Songs !
This were a tale which rightly sung,
Would make old men grow glad and young—
Would make old foes forget their wrongs :
For since this joyous world begun
Was never sure such love as this
By mortal man from woman won—
So fair a dream, so brimmed with bliss.

For with the setting sun she passed—
Swift flame to flame—her rose-bright face
Still with that new-won human grace
Wooing my own unto the last.
Bidding my heart to singing cheer,
For joy that on that hillside lone,
Love visible, divine and dear
Had been through one long day its own.

AN EARTH SPIRIT.

A FLAME that dances down the wind,
A swallow-wing against the sky,
An Autumn leaf to brush your cheek
And whirl away, no more am I.

Friends fall, dreams fade, the gods are
dead.

My daylight suffers no eclipse—
Across eternal abysms
I kiss to Fate my finger-tips.

For one am I in brain and heart
And breath with her who gave me breath,
Who keeps her green way singingly
Athwart the cairns where slumbereth

Alike high Valor and fair Love,
Where dust the mouth of Deirdre is,
And on the lips of Cuchulain
Forgotten all is Emer's kiss.

THE MAGIC ISLES OF MANANNAN.*

FAR past furthest reach of mortal dreaming,
Swung beyond the sunset's utmost span,
Golden through the purple twilight gleaming,
Lie the Magic Isles of Manannan.

There beneath green boughs where fruit and
flower
Bloom together through the cloudless year,
There with deathless rapture for their dower,
Their bright spirits all undimmed of Fear ;

Pace in paired delight, the fond, immortal
Shades whom Honor here Love's goal denied,
Queens who would not step o'er Duty's portal,
Lords who held unstained their plumes' high
pride.

Thither sailing through the pearl-pale splendor
Of a May moon, with dream-sails unfurled,
Shall I find thee, O my Queen most tender,
Heart's Desire and White Rose of the World.

* Manannan.—A sea-god.

Yea, and finding, wilt thou bend to listen
Lily-wise—(O unforgotten grace !)
Will thy grey eyes into azure glisten,
And the rose-light gladden all thy face ?

As at last the Hidden Word is spoken,
As at length the flame-writ script's unrolled,
As for aye the wizard spell is broken,
Laid upon our lips in Erin old.

So I dare to dream, the dull years cheating,
Holding yet our Golden Vision true,
So, O Love o' mine, this word of greeting
O'er the Fairy Seas I waft to you.

THE LAST OF THE FIANNA.

"They lay down on the side of the hill at Teamhair, and put their lips to the earth, and died."—*Gods and Fighting Men.*

To the dewy earth they turned their faces,
Sweet, green Mother of their old delight ;
They for whom in Erin no more place was—
They the once strong bulwarks of her might ;
Scarce a good man's stone-throw from where
Tara
Reared its shining splendor on the height.

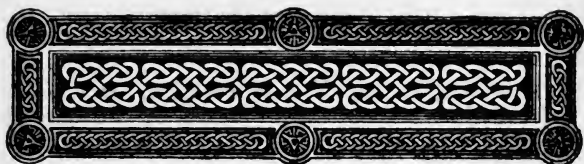
Golden-shod the hours in that fair palace
Danced like maidens to a festal song,
But for them who drained Life's bitter chalice
There upon the hill the day was long :
Till sweet Death came down in the grey twilight,
Death, whose kind kiss heals all human wrong.

Kissing now their lids of drowsing vision
With a Dream of Life as it had been,
Glowing with the joy of swift decision,
Radiant with the flash of sword-blades keen,
Ringing with the songs of Nature's Springtime,
Crowned with love of goddess and of queen.

Calling to them through the trooping shadows,
Beautiful, undimmed of Age or Fear,
Those who with them through the golden
 meadows,
In their morn of Manhood cloudless-clear,
Long ago behind the peerless Fionn,
Rode to hunt of foeman or of deer.

So Night set her seal upon their dreaming,
Of brave days and deeds for ever gone,
So they passed, the men of god-like seeming,
With their faces set towards the Dawn,
They whose like in all her future story,
Nevermore their land should look upon.

WANDERING FIRES



LOVE COMES BACK TO PSYCHE.

No more I sigh for envy of Queens dead,
Nor yet of any goddess worshippéd
Of old in laurel grove with rite odórous
Of youth and maid arrayed in chanting chorus ;
While on each rose-crowned head and body
 slender
The maiden Moon shot down her leaf-flecked
 splendour.

For lo ! has not sweet Love from where He slept,
And brush and bramble o'er his slumbers crept,
To free and full-veined life again awaking,
The death-dews from his drowsing vision shaking,
Risen and thither come, upon me turning
Soft eyes divine with pity and with yearning.

And holding to my lips a wreathéd cup
With dreams and raptures of dead days brimmed
up,
With thoughts of moonlight nights too sweet for
sleeping,
And days that held all Heaven in their keeping,
With schemes too large for any earth-completion,
And hopes to which not God might give fruition.

Said, "Drink, O Psyche, yea, and drain again
The chalice of thine olden Joy and Pain,
The swift Delight of Fire and Morn begotten,
The taste whereof thy lips have not forgotten,
Though bitter-barren on them now that taste is
As salt-sand blown athwart the marshy waste is."

And hearing, into Love's sweet face I laughed,
And kissed the hand that held the cup, and
quaffed,
Avid to pluck once more, though for an hour,
From out Life's heart its quintessence and flower,
To dream afresh, though Death were in the
dreaming—
And lo ! upon Love's lids the tears were gleaming.

OF ONE WHO DIED IN MURIAS.*

WHEN for a doom and punishment
God took the green tides of the sea,
And launched them from His hand on thee,
And all thy pride was from thee rent.

Nor all thy roofs of beaten gold,
Nor all thy walls of chrysolite
Might save thee from the rushing Night
Which down upon thy splendor rolled.

O Murias! with thee to death
Went one whose face was brighter far
Than is in June the vesper star
Seen from the moon an arrow's breadth.

Went one who of all ladies dead
Wast sure most fond and flower-fair,
A spirit wrought of sun and air,
And all on dreams and laughter fed.

* Murias.—One of the four sea-buried cities.

O Dreams ! O Laughter ! vain to stay
The rushing Death, the green Eclipse
Which surged between our meeting lips,
Which bore thee on its tides away !

White foam ! pale sea-drift ! at the will
Of the cold moon for ever tost,
Thy beauty but an old tune lost—
And yet one heart remembers still.

Yea, though no harper shall uplift
In song for evermore thy name,
And I am but a wandering flame
Upon the world's grey winds adrift.

Undimmed through all the years I hold,
Whence no god's finger may efface—
O Queen ! the shining of thy face
Beneath its coronal of gold.

ON BROADWAY.*

DREAMING of cities dead,
Of bright queens vanished,
Of kings whose names were but as seed wind-blown
E'en when white Patrick's voice shook Tara's
 throne,
My way along the great world-street I tread,
And keep the rites of Beauty lost, alone.

Cairns level with the dust—
Names dim with Time's dull rust—
Afar they sleep on many a wind-swept hill,
The beautiful, the strong of heart and will—
On whose pale dreams no sunrise joy shall burst,
No harper's song shall pierce with battle-thrill.

Long from their purpled heights,
Their reign of high delights,
The queens have wended down Death's mildewed
 stair,
Leaving a scent of lilies on the air,
To gladden earth through all its days and nights
That once it cherished anything so fair.

* On Broadway.—Broadway, New York City.

THE SINGERS TO THEIR LADY.

Lo ! our Lady, we crave thy grace,
If, for a little space between
Grey of the Dawning, Red of the Morning,
Yet of Beauty and Love we dream.
Soon in splendor of Freedom's waking,
Mountain and vale of thine shall gleam,
Then with a glory of swords upflashing
Shall we hail and proclaim thee Queen !

BACK TO IRELAND.

O ERIN, my Mother, again to thy shore,
From a fair and a far land across the pale foam,
To the hills and the valleys familiar of yore,
With the heart of the child who once left them,
I come.

Yea, back to kind Ireland, the years fade away,
The Past and the Present triumphantly blend,
As I've seen thee in dreams, lo ! I see thee to-day,
And each face is the face of a neighbour and
friend.

They said I should find thee, O Motherland mine !
Beyond all believing, changed, changed in each
part,
From the Ireland I knew in that far-distant time,
The Ireland whose vision I kept in my heart.

But no—with the same sudden flashing of rills,
The same dewy fragrance of meadow and glen,
The mystic enchantment of emerald hills,
You smile to me now as you smiled to me then.

And the woman thanks God that the faith of the
child,
And her love and her joy in thee, Mother most
sweet,
Have remained in her breast through the years
undefiled,
Till now when this song-wreath I lay at thy feet.

ON THE SEA.

NIGHT, and the hills of Ireland
Hiding themselves in the Night,
And the kiss of the moist sea-breezes
Luring to further flight.

But I think of a voice that is reading—
Reading of Roses and June,
And the splendor of mystic gardens
Glowing in Youth's high noon.

And my soul with the soul of the reader
Walks in the spaces broad,
The shining garden-places
Bright with the dews of God.

AN IRISH ENCHANTMENT.

A RIPPLE and shower of song-drops shaken—
A brown wing whirrs through the whitethorn
 spray—
O soul o' mine from your dream awaken !
Sweet, green Erin is far away.

Here is no highway of singing thrushes—
Onward with thunderous roar and din,
The great life-stream of the city rushes,
Avid to draw me in.

Yet over it all, the wild, faint laughter
Of grasses astir beneath the moon,
Cries, "Come !" "Come !" "Come !" and
 I follow after
The whispering elfin tune.

And my feet are winged with a blind desire
For brackened hills where the starbeams
 rest,
And dead as the ash of a last year's fire
Is the spirit within my breast.

Is it not time to cease your dreaming,
Lost and wandering heart o' me say ?
O fairy eyes through the thickets gleaming,
You've stolen my soul away !

THE SLEEPING KNIGHT.

BUT one came past, a spirit of white flame,
Who stooped and kissed him on the lips and eyes,
And whispered in his ear, " Arise ! " " Arise ! "
" God's heralds to the tourney call thy name ! "

Then dream-swift down the morning winds she
 sped,
Who had for evermore destroyed his dreams,
And with a murmured song of waking streams,
Him through dim ways and dewless meads she
 led.

Till suddenly, where rose a purple height
Of sunlit hills between them and the skies,
A smiting splendor shone upon his eyes
Of bannered hosts arrayed in armored might.

And when his glance through dazzlement might
 scan
The helméd features of that shining throng,
Beneath the flags of causes perished long,
He saw the face of many a ruined man.

Yea, side by side, in order debonair,
The dead, lost soldiers with the living men
Who strive with proven steel of sword or pen
For fairer Justice in a world unfair.

“ God’s mail-clad knights ! ” she said, “ Behold
your place !
And here, for slakement of your long road’s
drouth,
Again I kiss you on the eyes and mouth,
Who may bestow on you no further grace ! ”

And so was gone, a mist-wreath in the sun,
No more nor less ; but he in that fair host
Who reckon well all things for Freedom lost,
His day of life-long service had begun.

AN ATTIC MEMORY.

'TwiXT dreams and dreams I see it yet—
What is perchance itself a dream—
So faint, so transient, falls that gleam
Of white against the hillside set.

Green walls of holy quiet there,
The sombre hedgerows gird it round
Beyond the range of mortal sound—
The very silence is a prayer.

All silent too, the lips and feet
Of the white-vestured maid who goes
With wreaths of laurel and of rose
Yet from the plucking dewy-sweet.

And o'er them in meek homage bends
Her own fair brow low on the shrine,
Intent to catch the word divine
That to her ear Apollo lends.

With tranced visions of the night
Her cheek is pale, her eye is dim,
Her soul unto its chaliced rim
Is brimmed with wonder and delight.

For her no earth-born passion mars
Her worship of her heart's sole lord,
She holds her holy watch and ward,
Alike beneath the sun and stars.

.

And so the vision gleams and goes—
The god, the girl, the snow-white walls—
And yet upon my spirit falls
The fragrance of a fresh-plucked rose.

THE LOST MOMENT.

A LITTLE space, a little golden space
Plucked from the heart of Time, I saw thy
face ;
O friend ! whose presence made the whole world
glad,
O friend ! whose absence makes the whole
world sad,
And now through voiceless Night I call to thee—
No answer comes—*Hast thou forgotten me ?*

Nay, what spell have I that should make thee
come ?
Whose lips unto the very end were dumb :
Who, reading in thine eyes with vision clear,
The word thou dared'st not speak, nor I to
hear,
With nice discretion weighed each answering
glance,
Lest that the soul flash through by any
chance.

And so the shining moment sped, while you
And I for ever to ourselves untrue,
With empty babble of small words destroyed
The one brief space that God from out the
void
Had flung to us with high, imperial hand,
The fools who did not dare to understand!

APRIL.

SWIFT flight of swallow-wings
Against a roof of blue
That opens here and there
To let the sunbeams through.

Light over all the Earth,
A flood of white joy spread—
I feel the new life stir
The ground beneath my tread.

It fills the robin's song,
It swells the bark of trees,
And capers o'er the lips
With every passing breeze.

And Hope was born this morn,
And Care died with the snow,
And hand-in-hand with Spring
To greet my love I go.

MOONLIGHT IN ATHENS.

HARK, love! yon note athwart the ramparts
falling—
The golden rapture of its sheer delight
Brimming the chaliced silence of the night—
'Tis Pan, 'tis joyous Pan himself that's calling—
Sweet! let us follow while the moon is bright.

Pale in her light all Athens lies a-dreaming
Here, where no footstep save our own may fall,
Here, where the ilex rears a dew-drenched wall,
Past sculptured gods and columns whitely
gleaming,
Ah, let us haste responsive to that call!

Yet pause a moment in this dreaming splendor,
While in that paean of impassioned bliss,
A new note mingles, sweet as Love's first kiss—
Ah, Philomel! what shall the great gods render
Of joy, for that small mouth thou yet dost miss?

Dear mouth, remembered in so fond a sorrow,
That hearing yet, athwart our vision clear,
Of starlit skies there strikes a shade of fear,
While down the years Love's eye foresees a morrow,
When thou no more shalt sing, nor we shall hear.

But Pan is calling ! Hence, despondent shadow !
All Nature laughs in radiant unison,
Whilst woodward o'er yon stretch of silvered lawn,
See, where converging from their streams and
 meadows,
Go dancing shapes of naiad and of fawn.

And all the burden of their song is " Follow ! "
" Hence to the woods, O mortal maid and man,
Leave ye behind the grey world while you can—
Its empty gauds, its prizes vain and hollow,
And dance by moonlight to the pipes of Pan ! "

THE CONCERT.

Madison Square Park, New York.

DELIGHT of dappled moonbeams on the grass,
Delight of music heard through sleeping
leaves,
Delight of whispered word of lad and lass—
The lip that murmurs and the breast that
heaves :
And rising fair where Broadway fronts the Park,
Last triumph of a Hero's homeward march—
A snowy glory gleaming through the dark—
The goddess-guarded, Victory-crownéd arch.*

Yonder, Diana stays her flight and dream†
Of dewy wand'rings through the forest aisles
With Endymion, of the starlit streams
That showed them mirrored bliss of blended
smiles.
But ah, what dream shall wake the mortal boy
Who long to meads of asphodel has gone,
While she for whom has died all Hope and Joy,
Immortal and a goddess still lives on.

* The Dewey Arch.

†The Diana on Madison Square Garden Tower.

BYRON.

THINE is the power of elemental things,
Thine the large gladness of the sun and sea,
The fire that clothes the lightning's forkéd
wings,
The joy unchainable of spirits free.
And these have been thy largesse unto me,
Thou lord of Song and Loveliness and Might,
Whose very name a laurelled victory,
Strong-winged, immortal, holds its eagle-flight
Yet high 'mid circling clouds towards the perfect
Light.

That perfect Light is Freedom ; in thy day
Where'er men strove against Time-hallowed
Wrong,
There didst thou launch, to nerve them to the
fray
With sceptred Might, thy thunderbolts of Song ;
And all that did to that great heart belong—
Crowned with the last, supreme high sacrifice
For Greece, and therefore is thy worship strong
To-day within men's hearts, as when thine eyes
Closed last in dreamless sleep 'neath far Hellenic
skies.

And in far generations yet to be,
This, this shall be thine honour and thy praise,
That of all voices raised for Liberty
Thine was the strongest ; that in noonday blaze,
The flush'd pride and splendor of thy days,
Singing of Freedom, thou upon her shrine,
Laid'st down thy very life, and though we gaze
Back to the uttermost, far source of Time,
No song shall we find there, nor singer's death like
thine.

Byron ! who recks or cares where thou art laid,
Whose monument is in the human soul ;
Greece—Ireland—wheresoever undismayed,
Men still raise shining eyes towards the goal :
There, while far ages unto ages roll,
Secure thy resting-place and sure thy fame ;
Crowned with that last, supreme, high aureole
Of selfless sacrifice and Death, thy name
Shall burn on Freedom's shrine an everlasting flame.

ONLY FOR TO-DAY, LORD.

ONLY for to-day, Lord, only for to-day,
Let the days hereafter
Sorrow bring or laughter :
How *that* dies away—
Only for to-day, Lord, strength just for to-day.

Fallen are my castles, air-built, crystal-fair,
Ah, they were erected,
Not a stone neglected—
With such tender care :
Built of golden vapour, built on purple air !

Oh, my airy mansions ! Oh, the loving hands !
Oh, the tender dreaming !
See how fails our scheming—
All our plots and plans—
Oh, my airy mansions, built with loving hands !

Nevermore to dream, Lord, only just to live
From still hour to hour,
As lives grass or flower,
Sure this boon Thou'lt give—
Nevermore to dream, Lord, only just to live.

Nevermore with eager eyes towards the sun,
 Breast the purple ether,
 Ah, the Summer weather
 When that flight begun !
Sometimes wings are broken soaring to the sun.

A PAIR OF EYES.

GREY of the Northern seas,
Blue of the Southern skies,
All that is best in East or West,
Meet in my dear one's eyes.

Beautiful eyes and free !
Gladdened of sun and breeze,
As Argo's crew raised to the blue,
When they sailed the Middle Seas.

Shade in the pathless sands,
Springs in the desert of Life,
Founts of rest to gladden the breast
Outworn with years and strife.

Sweet, it is midnight here,
But come thou through the gloom,
And let them shine, the Light divine
Of Heaven will fill the room !

AS A SEAL ON THY HEART.

As a seal on thy heart, O beloved,
 As a song on thy mouth,
As a well in the desert upspringing
 To slake thy soul's drouth.

As a palm with green branches inviting
 Thy steps to its shade,
As a flame that upon one sole altar
 At morning is laid.

Yea, these and all else the mind thinketh
 Of worship and praise,
I would be, I would bring thee, O dearest,
 To gladden thy days !

BEYOND THE PURPLE PALISADES.*

BEYOND the purple Palisades,
Into the splendid, waiting West,
An ecstasy of living gold,
The August sun goes down to rest.

To rest, yet going, leaves behind
His legions of embattled light,
Rose, turquoise, opal, amethyst,
To hold at bay the coming night.

And yonder, 'neath the wooded heights,
Behold a little boat glides down,
A-freighted all with Dreams she goes
To Jersey from Manhattan town.

Nay, but for Fairyland she's bound,
Where never daylight fails or fades,
Sweet, let us follow ere the night
Veil all the purple Palisades.

* The Palisades, New York.

CRESSIDA.

(Troilus comes back).

So this is the place where she stood,
My dove with the dream-laden eyes,
Growing wide, as I bade her farewell,
In a terror of sleepy surprise :
They were blue as the April skies.

Through the flickering dance of the leaves,
Here the sunlight laughed down on her face—
Through the darkness and mildew of years,
Yet it beckons me backward through space,
With its tender, ineffable grace !

Blind and old it has called me back here,
To the place where I wandered, a boy,
And where tallest I stood 'mongst the sons
Of my father, the Princes of Troy,
All happily sleeping, save I.

I, Troilus, who yearning for Death,
Was reserved by the gods for the fate
Of a wanderer, roaming the earth,
Reft of kindred, friendship, and mate—
Pursued by the winds of their hate.

A laugh, shrill and sweet as the song
Of a bird, it rings out its delight,
And I see her, my love of the morn,
As the last time she stood in my sight,
In the camp of the Grecian that night !

A creature to mourn, not to curse,
A soulless summer-bloom tossed
By each light wind of passion, then flung
On the stream that flows Hades-ward, and lost
Where the waters swirled downward and crossed.

BEFORE A BUST OF EROS

(For a picture.)

To thee, O Love ! Once on a night
When all the earth danced to the tune,
And all the land was filled with June—
June in our hearts and hands and eyes,
In dewy ways and starry skies—
We sang it out of sheer delight—
 “To thee, O Love !”

To thee, O Love ! There faint and white
To-night against the laurels green
You stand ; I see the years between—
The pale years counting up their sum
Of tribute for that lost one won
From Fate within her own despite—
 “To thee, O Love !”

To thee, O Love ! Yea, for that grace
Surpassing grace, thou'lt have thy due ;
Although the beaker drained to you
Sweet lord of our old hopes and fears,
Be but a chalice filled with tears,
And there are tear-stains on thy face—
 “To thee, O Love !”

AN APRIL DAY.

AFAR across the land
The April winds are blowing,
The April sun is showing
Through clouds of fairy blue,
While swift as wing of swallow
The flight of Spring to follow,
Beloved, across the spaces
My heart flies forth to you.

Of April was our store
Of Joy and Love and Laughter,
The tears that followed after—
Were these of April too ?
Perchance, and yet they gather
Here in this singing weather,
For dread of all the Spring times
That loom bereft of you.

AN IDEALIST.

IN his young boyhood God unto him sent
An Angel, one who bearing from His skies
Immortal gladness, breathed it on his eyes,
And laid upon his lips a sacrament :

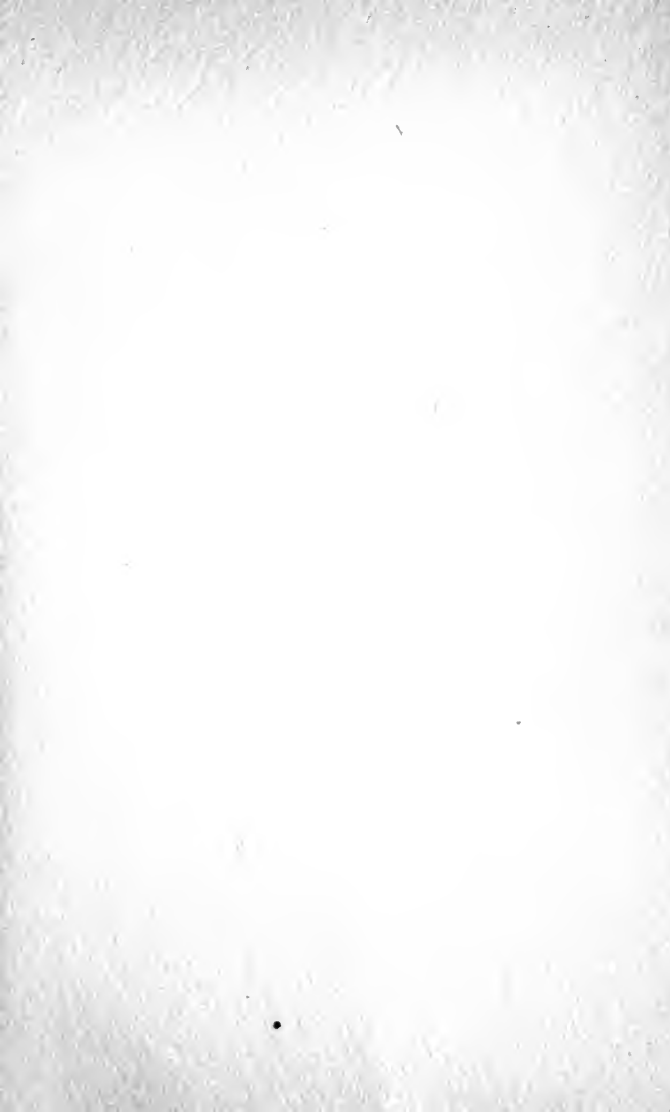
Saying, " Behold, O child, to thee I give
That which nor Time nor Fear shall make its
 spoil,
The gift of Love to hearten all thy toil,
Of Beauty to be thine while thou dost live."

And since that day though fifty years have
 sped,
Though Care full of thath been his handmaiden,
And on his path Pain's driving hurricane
Pale wreckage of his morning hopes hath
 spread.

Yet still with brow uplifted to the sun,
And mouth whereon an old love-sonnet sleeps,
His Golden Vision all undimmed he keeps,
And dreams of purple heights yet to be won.

Still with that morning wonder in his eyes,
Through teeming thoroughfare and crowded
 mart,
He goes with unscathed soul and gladsome
 heart,
Wise even as a little child is wise.





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